DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 028 144 SP 002 391

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Study of Change in Attitude of Participants in Summer Workshops for Teachers of Culturally Disadvantaged Youth.

Pub Date [68]

Note-6p.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.40

Descriptors-Disadvantaged Youth, Inservice Teacher Education, *Institutes (Training Programs), *Teacher Attitudes

A need exists for inservice programs for teachers of the disadvantaged which will develop in these teachers attitudes conducive to improving their relationships with inner city children. To fulfull this objective, a three-week summer institute was planned for 40 teachers and 10 administrators in 1966 (group one) and 40 teachers in 1967 (group two) with courses in the social psychology of the disadvantaged; communication, linguistics, and group processes; and the nature of value and attitude change. The Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory was administered as a pretest during the initial meetin g of each group, as a posttest on completion of the program, and as a resiliency test six months after completion of the program. Results showed that while postinstitute scores are encouraging when compared to preinstitute scores, there was a regression in both groups to preinstitute levels after six months. It would appear that this regression occurred because of a resistance to change in the institutional structure of schools, and that a need exists for organizational change to implement institute-inspired innovation. (SM)

ED028144

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STUDY OF CHANGE IN ATTITUDE OF PARTICIPANTS IN SUMMER WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

Reemt Baumann and Edward J. Nussel

Introduction

In-service educational programs have become an accepted practice among school districts that are concerned with upgrading teacher competency. Keeping teachers aware of the many changes current within professional circles is paramount for professional growth. The need for such programs is magnified when the problems of inner-city education are examined. Recommendations from Conant, Goldberg, Riessman,[1] and others have stressed the need for in-service educational programs in order to help teachers, among other things, overcome the "cultural shock" that often effects their relationship with disadvantaged children. Investigations by Becker, Harriott, and St. John[2] have revealed that inner-city teachers are often not satisfied with their current positions and seek new situations in schools that they define as "better." In-service programs for teachers of the disadvantaged, therefore, should be premised on the need to develop attitudes conducive to improved teacher relationships with inner-city children. Furthermore, these programs need to help teachers develop and improve curricula and methods that will enable them to function effectively in their classrooms.

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[1] J. B. Conant, Slums and Suburbs, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961, M. L. Goldberg, "Adapting Teacher Style to Pupil Differences: Teachers for Disadvantaged Children," Merrill Palmer Quarterly, April, 1964, pp. 161-178; Frank Riessman, The Culturally Deprived Child, Harper and Row, 1962.

[2] H. S. Becker, "Social Class Variations in the Teacher-Pupil Relationship," Journal of Educational Sociology, April, 1952, 451-465; R. E. Herriott & N. H. St. John, Social Class and the Urban School, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966.

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If such in-service programs are to be regarded as effective, measurable attitudinal changes should be found among participating teachers. Therefore, for this study, the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory was chosen to evaluate participant attitude change in two particular institutes. The Inventory purports "to measure those attitudes of a teacher which predict how well he will get along with pupils in interpersonal relationships, and indirectly how well satisfied he will be with teaching as a vocation." (p. 3 manual) Obviously, these characteristics are applicable to teachers in any professional position but the problems of inner-city education demand that the childrens' educational opportunities be improved by the upgrading of teacher performance. The program described below is directed at the idea that attitudinal changes are necessary if teacher performance in the inner-city is to be improved. Such changes involve, for example, attitude toward self, toward disadvantaged children and their parents, and attitude toward colleagues.

The Program

In order to fulfill the objectives of the program as paraphased above, a three-week institute was planned for forty teachers and ten administrators in Summer, 1966 (Group I) and for forty teachers in Summer, 1967 (Group II). Essentially, both programs were the same inasmuch as the following "courses" were offered both summers by the same instructors.

a. The Social Psychology of the Disadvantaged

b. Communication, Linguistics and Group Processes

c. The Nature of Value and Attitude Change

Other offerings included:

d. Methods and Materials of Teaching the Disadvantaged

e. Administrative Leadership

These sections had different instructors the second year but the curriculums were generally the same both summers.

Regular sessions were supplemented by resource people, panels, films and field trips to places where projects for the disadvantaged were currently operative.

Methods of Data Collection

The Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory was administered as a pre-test during the initial meeting of the group. The inventory was again administered as a post-test at the completion of the program. A third administration of the inventory was given to those participants who could be present for a meeting in January. The purpose of the third administration was to test the resiliency of previous scores. Two major problems were investigated:

Problem 1: What changes in attitude toward students, as measured by the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory, were provided by the summer workshops?

Problem 2: Is the attitude of participants as indicated in an immediate post-workshop evaluation affected by a return to inner-city classrooms? (Is there a difference in post-workshop scores taken immediately after the workshop and several months thereafter?)

Results

One is encouraged when pre-institute scores are compared with post-institute scores. The following comparisons were made between Test I and Test II:

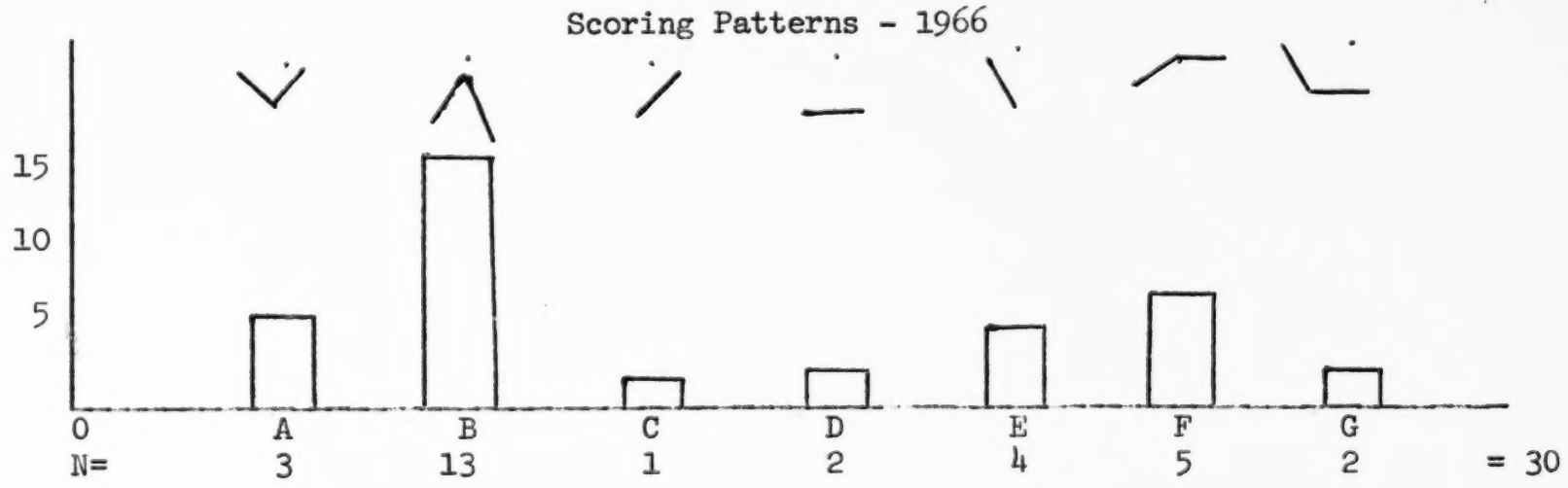
		Gp. I, 1966	Gp. II, 1967
Decrease	-10 pts.	5	2
No Change	- 9 to +10 pts.	10	13
Increase	11 to 30 pts.	10	10
Substantial Increase	31 to 50 pts.	4	12
Very Substantial Increase	+51 pts.	0	3
		29	40

Group I		Group II	
Mean Test I	45.5	Mean Test I	35.2
Mean Test II	54.4	Mean Test II	57.3
Mean Test III	44.6	Mean Test III	51.4

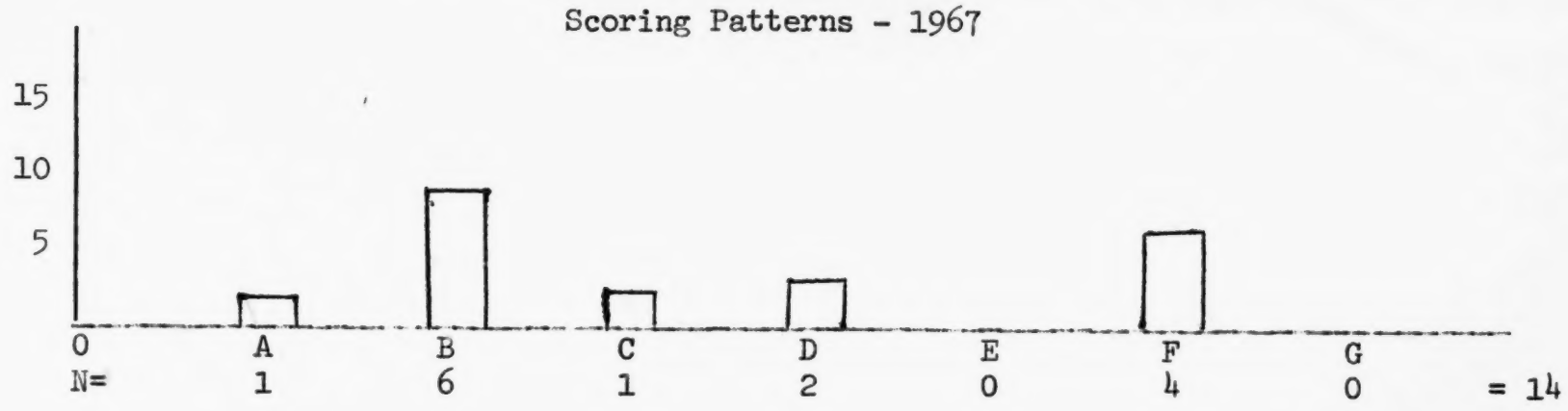
The second post-test administered approximately six months after the conclusion of the institute revealed that the scores of many of the participants were <u>not</u> resilient. Not only was the mean of those tested three times lower than the second administration mean but the scoring patterns of the participants represent a regression back to levels maintained at the beginning of the institute.

Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory - Results

Scoring Patterns - 1966



Scoring Patterns - 1967



Notice, in particular, that nineteen (19) of the forty-four (44) people (43%) tested three times show this kind of regressive tendency while only nine people (20%) show a relative persistence.

Discussion and Conclusions

Ideally, the program would hope to maintain a large frequency of Pattern F. However, since this is not the case, questions must be asked in terms of why the improved scores do not persist.

What happens to a teacher who returns to his school intent on making changes that he perceives will improve the education of his charges? We've been told that many of the ideas exchanged during the institute, although apparently valuable and interesting, were not implementable in the school setting. In particular, practices regarded as innovative were not carried out because institutionally the structure of the educational bureaucracy does not appear to be pliable enough to permit deviations from existing procedures.

A number of conclusions about in-service education have emerged as a result of these investigations:

1. That reasonable suggestions derived from institute proceedings should be attempted in the school setting.
2. That organizational changes should be implemented to facilitate adoption of the innovation.

3. That school administrators should attend institutes with their teachers and should help to explore methods of expediting change.
4. That school systems explore the feasibility of offering institutes for a complete hand picked staff focusing on a particular change (e.g., total team teaching) then placing that entire staff into a new school and told "go to it."

Although our studies suggest a degree of criticism at public education for its inability to change, it should not be thought of in that light. The institutional inertia generated by any organizational structure is history and known to be terribly deterministic. The binding web tragically involves all who are involved and escape is not easy.

Change will be slow within our public schools because teacher attitudes are institutionally controlled by enforced conformity at a time when change is demanded. Only through imaginative new models will successful change be implemented and then only to create new inhibiting models.

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